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U. S. Department of AgricultureSTATEMENT ON FOREST PRACTICES ADOPTED
AT FOREST CONSERVATION CONFERENCE, WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 26, 1934.

The following general statement on forest practice requirements for operation under the Lumber Code was adopted, January 26, by the Forest Conservation Conference, called by the Secretary of Agriculture, and meeting in Washington. The statement covers practices applicable to all forest regions of the United States, and is expected to form a basis for regional woods practice agreements to be adopted as supplements to the lumber code.

Sustained Production of Forest Resources

A common purpose grounded equally in public welfare and industry welfare dictates that all forest land hereafter to be cut over under the Lumber Code jurisdiction shall be left in favorable condition for regrowth. Conforming to this basic requirement, it is necessary that within the limits of practicability, measures be taken by the operator to safeguard timber and young growing stock from injury by fire and other destructive agencies; during logging operations to prevent damage to young trees; and to provide for restocking the land after logging, if sufficient advance growth is not already present; and where feasible in practice to leave some portion of merchantable timber, usually the less mature trees, as a basis for growth and the next timber crop. The greater the amount of the growing stock retained, the greater the ensuing growth to be expected and the sooner operations can return to the same area.

Specific Measures of Woods Practice1. Forest Protection During Logging

Fire protection during and immediately following logging is an indispensable condition for forest regrowth. Responsibility for adequate provision for the control of fires during or immediately following logging operations, and in any way caused by said operations rests upon the said individual operator. He must definitely assume the responsibility of taking practical measures of fire control. This will involve a variety of steps in different logging conditions. It may include slash and snag disposal where necessary, strict rules as to use of fire by employees including smoking in the woods, equipment of logging locomotives and engines with adequate devices for preventing fires, having readily available crews properly equipped to fight fires upon call, closing operations during exceptionally dry periods, and other precautionary measures. Where a general fire protection

system is in effect, it will be expected to correlate with the more intensive system of the individual operator, but it will in no sense replace the protective system of the operator or relieve him of responsibility of protecting his own property to the extent that he has created the hazard. He cannot, however, assume responsibility for fire caused by public carelessness or inadequate public protection.

2. Extension of Cooperation in Protection Against Fire, Insects and Diseases

To the end that protection against fire and other destructive agencies may be extended rapidly to all forest areas that are now unprotected and that may require protection, the industry will endeavor to secure action on the part of all operating timberland owners in the direction of cooperating with public agencies in systematic fire prevention and suppression and such protective action as may prove desirable and practicable for protection against insects and diseases. The industry will also seek such cooperation on the part of non-operating forest land owners.

3. Conservation of Immature Trees and Young Growth

So far as practicable all advance growing stock upon the land in the form of young trees of valuable species below merchantable size shall be preserved during logging operations and left without injury for future growth. A certain amount of injury and loss is inevitable in felling trees and skidding logs and in the disposal of slash. Much of the injury and loss sustained in the past can be avoided by conscious care on the part of the woods foremen and his men. The saving of this advance young growth shall be set up by operators as a distinct aim to be kept constantly in view by woods employees.

4. Provision for Restocking the Land after Cutting

Since natural reproduction will usually be obtained where partial cutting is practiced, the safest measure to obtain regrowth after logging where conditions permit, is to leave on the logged areas a sufficient number of trees of desirable species to yield a commercial cut at reasonable intervals. Under certain conditions instead of partial cutting, leaving seed trees or groups of seed trees on or adjacent to logged areas may be sufficient to insure a regrowth on the logged-off areas. If there is an insufficient reserve stand or conditions are otherwise adverse and the prospects of securing natural reseedling are uncertain, planting may be desirable.

5. Partial Cutting or Selective Logging

To the extent practicable, partial cutting or selective logging shall be the general standard for local measures of woods practice.

The industry will without delay, making use of studies already made, undertake to determine by regions or by forest types, the extent to which merchantable sizes of timber may wisely be left as part of the forest growing stock. Upon satisfactory determination of such conditions the industry will promptly establish standards of practice looking to the attainments of this objective.

In certain regions or forest types and conditions other methods than selective cutting may be allowed, where conditions do not justify selective cutting.

In order to provide for still greater flexibility and for departure where necessary from the regional or type standards that may be adopted, each individual operator shall be allowed to communicate to the Divisional Administrative Agency the standard and methods which he proposes as best suited in his individual operation to achieve the declared objectives of conservation and sustained production. And if such undertaking is determined by the Divisional Administrative Agency to equal the regional or type standard of selective logging, or other method of promoting regeneration, it shall be approved in lieu thereof. This in effect allows modification of the regional standard upon submission and approval of specific individual management plans.

6. Sustained Yield

Since the basis purpose of sustained yield is to perpetuate the forest by regrowth after cutting and to maintain in a given local district or on a given forest enough growing stock to provide raw material for industry without interruption, and to safeguard the public welfare, sustained yield is a desirable objective and it shall be adopted as the objective of management for individual tracts or groups of tracts as rapidly as various considerations permit and owners find it advantageous as a matter of orderly business policy. Fire protection, preservation of young growth and partial cutting as outlined in the preceding paragraphs are important steps toward regional and local sustained yield.

7. Public Cooperation

The measure of success ultimately achieved by these undertakings of the Industry, is dependent upon the extent and character of public cooperation in each State.

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